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South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

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WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

The VA is taking its internal culture-change message to the public with a new video about the vital role women play in the military and the importance of providing women veterans with high quality health care.

VA's Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group recently completed a 60-second public service announcement (PSA) that challenges viewers to rethink pre-conceived notions about women Veterans. This dynamic video features images of women in service to our country: they drive supply trucks, participate in reconnaissance missions, walk safety patrols, and operate helicopter machine guns.

The PSA is available for viewing on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=BOP5DCgjxPE and www.va.gov. Broadcast organizations interested in obtaining a broadcast-quality version of the PSA should contact VA's Office of Public Affairs (202-461-7600).

The VA reports that the number of women using the VA has doubled in the past decade, and that increase is expected to continue into the next decade. More than half of the women using VA health care have a service-connected disability. These range from combat PTSD to missing limbs. The PSA gives a sampling of the service-connected disabilities women veterans must cope with on a daily basis.

The PSA was developed for nationwide release from a new employee orientation video—available at www.womenshealth.va.gov—created as part of VA's ongoing efforts to change its culture to be more understanding and accommodating of women veterans and honor the important service they have given our country.

In addition to new employee orientation, the VA is spreading its culture-of-change message to current employees through posters, conferences, and e-mail messaging. VA health care providers are all given the opportunity to participate in a ground-breaking mini-residency program in Women's Health for Veterans. This program has already educated more than 1,100 VA providers on the latest knowledge in gender-specific health care.

For more information about VA programs and services for women Veterans, please visit: www.va.gov/womenvet and www.womenshealth.va.gov.

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COZAD'S HONORED FOR THEIR DEDICATED SERVICE

During the American Legion Post 240 regular monthly meeting held Wednesday evening, October 12, Legion member Fred Cozad was honored for his record-setting 60 years of service as a South Dakota Veteran's Service Officer.

Veterans Field Officer Paul Gremse of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, made the presentation on behalf of the South Dakota Veterans Service officers Association. The award read:

*Outstanding Service Award, Fredric R. Cozad –
In deepest appreciation for your years of
service to South Dakota veterans and their
dependents, August 29, 2011, South
Dakota Veterans Service Officers Association.*

"If it wasn't for Fred, a lot of veterans wouldn't have their benefits," said Gremse.

Commander Butch Fanning also presented Mr. Cozad with a special award, "In appreciation for your efforts and dedication of 60 years as a Bennett County Service Officer Serving the American Legion and the veterans of South Dakota".

Cozad's 66-year membership with Post 240 has spanned several wars beginning at the close of World War II.

Referring to Mrs. Cozad's role as Fred's long-time business partner, Post Chaplain Gerald Goetzinger said that Cozad's role as a veteran's service officer was the "best bargain Bennett County ever got, because it included Luella." Mr. Cozad said that he was honored to be a Veterans Service Officer. "This was a real labor of love that Luella and I had – to take a veteran who earned his benefits and help steer him through the bureaucracy."

Fred and Luella, thanks for all the bread you kneaded, baked and served!



Sometime in your life, hope that you might see one starved man, the look on his face when the bread finally arrives. Hope that you might have baked it or bought or even kneaded it yourself. For that look on his face, for your meeting his eyes across a piece of bread, you might be willing to lose a lot, or suffer a lot, or die a little, even. ~Daniel Berrigan



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ERK RECOGNIZED

Beth Erk, RN, VA Black Hills Health Care System, Ft. Meade, SD, was recently honored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve as a Patriotic Employer.

Erk was nominated by Pfc. Sheena Olson-Embrey, a member of the 842nd Engineer Company, for her support to Olson-Embrey as she prepared for deployment.

Patriotic Employers are recognized for contributing to national security and protecting liberty and freedom by supporting their employee's participation in America's National Guard and Reserve Force.



HENDERSON DEPARTS ON DEPLOYMENT

Heather Henderson, veterans service officer, for the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Claims Office in Sioux Falls, has deployed on a voluntary mission to England. Henderson, on a Title 10 Order with the Air Force, will be working on a supply mission via Operation OEF. Henderson will return to her position with the Department in May 2012.

In the meantime, Henderson's files have all been reassigned to the rest of the staff in the Claims Office. If you are using Vetra Spec you will have the ability to see who the claims have been assigned to. If you don't have Vetra Spec, this is another great reason to make the investment!

RAPID CITY STAND DOWN DECLARED A SUCCESS

The Rapid City Stand Down, held Thursday, October 13, in Rapid City has been deemed a success. Tentative numbers show that over 155 veterans were served—that's 45 more than last year. Mayor Sam Kooiker was on hand to welcome the participants and share a personal story about his father. Field Officer Paul Gremse represented the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and assisted veterans with questions regarding benefits and services.

Veterans Service Officers Neil Lutke, Daniel Kivi, and Frank Marshall also assisted with the Stand Down.

EAFB RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Ellsworth Air Force Base announces the door prize winners from their Retiree Day Luncheon held September 16.



Base Exchange \$100.00 winner: Judith Button.

Base Credit Union \$100.00 winner: Kathy Hvitved.

Base commissary \$25.00 winners: Red Alspaw, Roxie Baxter, Roxanne L. Baxter, FC Baxter, Robert Brewbaker, Jerome Button, Dick & Diane Fraser, Shirley Freeman, Paul Gremse, Nancy Gehike, Kenneth Holm, C. W. Johnson, Fay Morgan, Bob & Shirley Mallow, Pete Peterson and Connie Tillotson.

Pepsi Shirt winners: Sony Cody, Roxanne Baxter, Alvin Titus.

28th Force Support Squadron Golf Cards: Alice Peterson, Sharon Titus.

28th FSS Bowling Lanes Cards: Stan Friedt and Ed Grebe.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 25—SDDVA Fall Mini Conference—Rapid City
October 26—SDDVA Fall Mini Conference—Pierre
October 27—SDDVA Fall Mini Conference—Brookings
November 1—SFVAHCS Veterans Benefits Fair and Community Open House—Sioux Falls
November 11—Grand Opening of Women of War Center
November 11—Veterans Day
November 17—SD Veterans Council Legislator Roundtable—Aberdeen
November 18—SD Veterans Council Legislator Roundtable—Chamberlain
November 19—SD Veterans Council Legislator Roundtable—Piedmont
December 2—SD Veterans Council Legislator Roundtable—Watertown
December 3—SD Veterans Council Legislator Roundtable—Sioux Falls
December 10—National Wreaths Across America Remembrance



Next week's edition of the newsletter will include a listing of Veteran's Day activities around the state.

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